**Undervaluing inbound tourism will hamper the UK economy’s recovery from Coronavirus says UKinbound**

**Wednesday 6 May 2020** – Leading tourism trade association UKinbound has issued a stark warning that the country risks damaging and prolonging its economic recovery if the inbound tourism industry, worth nearly £23bn to the UK economy in 2018, does not receive long term financial support alongside domestic and outbound tourism recovery plans.

The warning comes as the association releases its latest Business Barometer results, with one in three tourism businesses stating they will have to stop trading in the next six months, even with the current Government support in place. Just over a quarter (27%) of respondents said their business will survive the Coronavirus crisis.

The barometer, compiled in conjunction with Qa research, also surveyed members about their business activity in Q1 2020, with 70% of respondents saying that bookings/visitor numbers/ customer orders were down (by an average of 55%) compared to the same period last year. 75% saw a decrease in yield, compared to Q1 2019, by an average of 56%.

Confidence about the impending 12 months also hit an all-time low, with just 11% of respondents saying they were confident about the coming year.

Joss Croft, CEO, UKinbound commented “Over the past two months the Government has put in place vast financial support programmes which has been a lifeline for many tourism businesses (albeit some businesses are still falling through the gaps), but as we look to the recovery path and the lifting of domestic restrictions, it’s imperative that the needs of those businesses that rely wholly on international visitors aren’t forgotten.

“International travel is not likely to resume for many months and so we are most concerned about our tour operator and destination management company members as the majority will not be able to earn any revenue realistically until Spring 2021 at the earliest. Inbound tourism generates almost £23 billion for the UK economy and we must do everything we can to safeguard this revenue stream. Furthermore, these businesses help to deliver on the Government’s ‘levelling up’ agenda as they promote and then take tourists to destinations all over the UK generating valuable revenue for regional economies.”

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**About UKinbound**

UKinbound is a leading travel trade association and the only one which focuses solely on the interests of the UK's inbound tourism sector. It has over 400 members from across the travel trade. UKinbound addresses and engages with Government, the media, travel trade and the general public to raise awareness of the importance of inbound tourism to the UK economy.